



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

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Shana Jones, Special Assistant
Daryl Fields, Public Affairs Officer
610 N.W. Loop 410
San Antonio, Texas 78216
(210) 384-7452

23 TEXAS MEXICAN MAFIA HIERARCHY CHARGED IN FEDERAL R.I.C.O. CASE

Conspiracy charge alleges responsibility for 22 San Antonio area murders

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton and FBI Special Agent in Charge Ralph Diaz announced the indictment against 23 San Antonio residents, all of whom are in leadership positions in the Texas Mexican Mafia, for violating the federal Racketeering Influenced Corrupt Organization (RICO) statute.

"Intimidation, violence and murder are standard operating procedure for these gangsters. This indictment is the first step in putting them out of business," stated United States Attorney Johnny Sutton. "Since 2004, our office has put over 130 members of the Mexican Mafia in federal prison and we are committed to disrupting and dismantling this criminal organization."

Federal and state authorities arrested TMM Captain Michael Vargas, aka "Mikio," without incident late yesterday afternoon. Seventeen defendants charged in this indictment were already in custody prior to today. They are:

Jacinto Navajar, aka "Cache", TMM General
Ruben Garcia, aka "Chorre", TMM Sergeant
Ted Ansualda, aka "Porky", TMM Lieutenant
Trinidad Gomez, aka "Trini Boy", TMM soldier
Jesse Ramirez, aka "Chuy", TMM Captain
Billy Silva, aka "Wild Bill", TMM Asst. General
Leonard Tremillo, aka "Joker", TMM Lieutenant
Vidal Longoria, aka "Corky", TMM Lieutenant
Jose Martinez, aka "Bam Bam", TMM Lieutenant

Joe Pena, aka "Pancho", TMM General
Hector Martinez, TMM soldier
Jesse Ozuna, aka "Low", TMM Lieutenant
Mark Alvarado, aka "Kickback", TMM soldier
Trinidad Riojas, aka "Trini", TMM Lieutenant
Mike Garcia, TMM Lieutenant
Carlos Ybarra, aka "Charlio", TMM Lieutenant
Jesse Rodriguez, aka "Chuy", TMM Sergeant

Authorities are actively searching for the five remaining defendants.

The one-count federal indictment, returned on January 29, 2008, and unsealed today, alleges that the defendants conspired together to further their criminal enterprise by committing 22 murders, 2 attempted murders, 1 solicitation to commit capital murder, robbery and extortion plus distributing heroin and cocaine. Upon conviction, each defendant faces life in federal prison.

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Racketeering Acts:

The indictment alleges a pattern of racketeering activity committed by the defendants including the:

- shooting death of Florencio “Lencho” Vasquez in September 2000;
- shooting death of Anthony “Tony” Blanco in November 2000;
- robbery and subsequent shooting death Michael Sanchez in March 2001;
- shooting death of Ruben Hernandez in January 2002;
- shooting death of Ernest Guzman in May 2002;
- shooting death of Jose “Arte” Moreno in June 2002;
- shooting death of Henry “Guero” Cantu in December 2002;
- shooting death of Agustin “Augie” Macias in July 2003;
- shooting death of Jose “Speedy” Lopez in July 2003;
- shooting death of Raymond “Mon” “Nochipa” Rodriguez in September 2003;
- shooting death of Jesse “Psych” Medina in February 2004;
- shooting death of Robert “Beto” Gleason in March 2004;
- shooting death of Robert “Robe” Murillo Fernandez in August 2004;
- shooting death of Jesse “Pelon” Guevara in August 2004;
- shooting death of Mercy Brooks in September 2004;
- shooting death of Tony Rodriguez in November 2004;
- shooting death of Juan “Green” Perez in December 2004;
- shooting death of Roy Vera in December 2004;
- shooting death of Joe Santos in November 2004;
- shooting death of Rudy “Scooby” Contreras in January 2005;
- shooting death of Hector Martinez in January 2005;
- shooting death of Robert Sanchez in April 2005;
- attempted murder of Ruben Rodriguez in January 2002;
- attempted murder of Ernesto “Neto” Rodriguez in June 2007;
- solicitation of the capital murder of Lydia Castro in January 2003;
- obtain large amounts of heroin and cocaine for further distribution and sale;
- control the distribution of heroin and cocaine by restricting drug trafficking among non-Texas Mexican Mafia members to those who paid extortion fees or a “tax;”
- protect “authorized” drug distributors from robbery, violence and competition; and,
- using violence in all forms and degrees to enforce the Texas Mexican Mafia drug distribution “tax.”

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This Organized Crime/Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) case resulted from a three-year-long investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, San Antonio Police Department, Bexar County Sheriff's Department with assistance from the Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Texas Department of Public Safety - Texas Rangers, Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Bexar County District Attorney's Office, Houston Police Department, Austin Police Department and Hondo Police Department. Assistant United States Attorney Joey Contreras and Special Assistant United States Attorney Mary Green are prosecuting this case on behalf of the Government.

The Mexican Mafia was formed in the early 1980's in the Texas prison system when predominantly Hispanic inmates banded together during a period of turmoil and violence within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Over the years, the gang has focused its efforts to promote widespread criminal activity including narcotics trafficking, extortion and murder. Also known as "Mexikanemi" or "La Eme," the organization was the subject of a 1993 federal indictment in the Western District of Texas which resulted in the conviction of Heriberto "Herb" Huerta, the then President of the organization, and a number of his fellow gang members on drug charges. In 1998, another federal indictment resulted in the conviction of Robert "Beaver" Perez, a Mexican Mafia General, and 15 other fellow gang members for their pattern of racketeering activity including six murders committed in 1994 and 1995 in the City of San Antonio and eight murders allegedly committed by gang members in 1997. The 1997 homicides included the shotgun killing of five people at a residence on West French Place on August 8, 1997. In 2004, 25 members of the Mexican Mafia were indicted and convicted of federal drug, firearm and money laundering charges. During the time of the conspiracy, the organization was responsible for distributing over 150 kilograms of cocaine and over 30 kilograms of heroin. Authorities also seized approximately 80 firearms and approximately \$50,000 in cash.

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